

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:

requesting that a browser-based application be retrieved from a server, said browser-based application requiring no web components to be installed before using the
5 application other than a web browser;

receiving a single page from the server that contains code for a user interface for the application;

displaying the user interface to a user, said user interface containing a plurality of content windows;

10 determining that at least one piece of data needs to be retrieved from a data source; from a hidden frame in the single page, sending an asynchronous request to the server for the at least one piece of data;

receiving the at least one piece of data from the server; and
using the at least one piece of data in the application.

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2. The method of claim 1, wherein the user can continue interacting with the user interface of the application while the asynchronous request for the at least one piece of data is pending.

20 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the request for the at least one piece of data is based on a specific action taken by the user that requires the at least one piece of data to be requested.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the request for the at least one piece of data is based on a prediction of a future data that is likely to be needed and wherein the at least one piece of data is then only used in the application if needed.

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5. The method of claim 1, wherein the user interface does not change pages as the user interacts with the application.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the user interface resembles a client-server
10 application.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of content windows have content displays that can be customized by a user.

15 8. The method of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of content windows displays at least one piece of content that is selected from the group consisting of: a report, at least one database field, a web page, a word processing document, a result of a SQL statement, a content of a file, and a result of a web service.

20 9. The method of claim 8, wherein the at least one piece of content is displayed in a format selected from the group consisting of a table, a graph, a gauge, and a list.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein an alert can be defined for any of the plurality of content windows to indicate a particular event has occurred.

11. A method comprising:

5 receiving a request from a user to access a browser-based application, said browser-based application requiring no web components to be installed before using the application other than a web browser;

determining that at least one piece of data needs to be displayed in the application;

retrieving the at least one piece of data from at least one data source to include in the 10 application;

generating a single page that contains code for a user interface of the application;

returning the single page to the browser so the user interface can be displayed to the user;

receiving an asynchronous request for additional data from the single page;

15 retrieving the additional data from a data source asynchronously so the user can continue interacting with the user interface while the additional data is being retrieved; and

returning the additional data to the single page for use in the application.

20 12. The method of claim 11, wherein the single page contains a plurality of documents for displaying each of a plurality of content windows to the user.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein each of the plurality of content windows displays at least one piece of content that is selected from the group consisting of: a report, at least one database field, a web page, a word processing document, a result of a SQL statement, a content of a file, and a result of a web service.

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14. The method of claim 11, wherein the request for additional data is based on a specific action taken by the user that requires the additional data to be requested.

15. The method of claim 11, wherein the request for additional data is based on a

10 prediction of future data that is likely to be needed.

16. The method of claim 11, wherein the user interface does not change pages as the user interacts with the application.

15 17. The method of claim 16, wherein the user interface resembles a client-server application.

18. A system comprising:

a server computer;

20 a client computer coupled to the server computer over a network;

wherein the client computer is operable to send an initial request to the server for a

browser-based user interface having multiple content windows, and to send to

the server asynchronous requests for data as a user interacts with the user interface; and

wherein the server computer is operable to receive the initial request from the client computer for the browser-based user interface, to generate the user interface into a single page, to send the single page user interface to the client computer, to receive the asynchronous requests for data, to use an application business logic to retrieve the asynchronously requested data from at least one data source, and to return the asynchronously requested data to the client computer.

5 10. 19. The system of claim 18, wherein the server computer is further operable to generate the single page having a plurality of documents for displaying each of the multiple content windows.

15 20. The system of claim 18, wherein the client computer is further operable to allow the user to interact with the user interface without changing to a different page.

21. The system of claim 18, wherein the at least one data source is selected from the group consisting of a reporting server, a relational database server, and a data warehouse server.